

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY CAIRO NIACT IMMEDIATE

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NODIS

FOR AMBASSADOR FROM SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EG, LE, US, SY

SUBJECT: LEBANON

REF: STATE 94215 AND 95617; CAIRO 5434

1. FYI: AS WE HAVE REFLECTED FURTHER ON HOW TO CONTINUE THE DIALOGUE WITH SADAT AND FAHMY ABOUT LEBANON, WE FIND THAT THERE IS NOT MUCH MORE WE CAN PROVIDE IN THE WAY OF ANALYSIS THAT GOES BEYOND WHAT WE HAVE ALREADY CONVEYED IN OUR LAST TWO MESSAGES (REFTELS). OUR PURPOSE HAS BEEN TO STIMULATE SOME MORE CONSIDERED EGYPTIAN FEEDBACK AND WE HAVE FOUND IT SOMEWHAT FRUSTRATING THAT ALL WE GOT BACK FOR A LONG TIME WAS REITERATION OF EGYPTIAN SUSPICIONS ABOUT OUR RELATIONSHIP TO SYRIAN ROLE IN LEBANON. YOUR LATEST CONVERSATION WITH FAHMY (CAIRO 5434), HOWEVER, INDICATES THAT WE MAY FINALLY HAVE SUCCEEDED IN GETTING A SERIOUS EXCHANGE STARTED. WE WANT TO ENCOURAGE THIS, AND THE FOLLOWING POINTS WHICH YOU SHOULD CONVEY FROM ME TO SADAT THROUGH FAHMY ARE DESIGNED WITH THIS OBJECTIVE IN MIND AS WELL AS TO ELICIT SECRET

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FURTHER RESPONSES FROM THEM TO THE QUESTIONS WE HAVE POSED IN REFTELS. END FYI.

2. I VERY MUCH WELCOME THE THOUGHTFUL OBSERVATIONS AND

QUESTIONS WHICH FAHMY CONVEYED TO YOU DURING YOUR APRIL 21 MEETING. THIS IS THE KIND OF TWO-WAY DIALOGUE THAT WE NEED AND THAT IS APPROPRIATE TO THE PRIMACY WE ATTACH TO OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH EGYPT.

3. IN REVIEWING THE TWO MESSAGES WE HAVE CONVEYED TO PRESIDENT SADAT AND FAHMY IN THE LAST THREE DAYS, I BELIEVE THAT THEY STILL REFLECT ACCURATELY OUR ANALYSIS AND OUR POLICIES FOR DEALING WITH THE PRESENT STAGE OF THE LEBANESE SITUATION. WE WILL BE SENDING FURTHER UPDATED ANALYSES OF SITUATION AS WE SEE IT FROM TIME TO TIME, BUT I WOULD LIKE TODAY TO PARTICULARLY ADDRESS THE QUESTIONS FAHMY HAS POSED TO YOU.

4. WE HAVE NEVER THOUGHT THAT THE PRESIDENT AND FAHMY QUESTIONED OUR PURPOSES IN LEBANON AND WE PARTICULARLY APPRECIATE PRESIDENT SADAT'S HAVING SENT WORD TO JUMBLATT AND ARAFAT TO EXERCISE RESTRAINT IN RESPONSE TO MY EARLIER REQUEST. SO THAT THERE CAN BE NO MISUNDERSTANDING ABOUT THE OUTCOME WE SEEK IN LEBANON, I WANT TO RESTATE IT AS CLEARLY AND AS UNAMBIGUOUSLY AS POSSIBLE. WE SEEK A RESULT WHICH AVOIDS THE DANGER OF THE LEBANESE CRISIS BECOMING THE SPARK FOR WIDER HOSTILITIES IN THE AREA WITH ALL THE ADVERSE EFFECTS THIS WOULD HAVE FOR THE MIDDLE EAST PEACEMAKING PROCESS. TO ACHIEVE SUCH A RESULT, WE BELIEVE IT IMPORTANT THAT A POLITICAL PROCESS BE SET IN MOTION IN LEBANON WHICH WILL PERMIT THE LEBANESE THEMSELVES TO REGAIN CONTROL OF THEIR OWN AFFAIRS, WHICH WILL KEEP SYRIA FROM ESTABLISHING A PERMANENT DOMINANT POSITION IN LEBANON, WHICH WILL AVOID ISRAELI INTERVENTION, AND WHICH WILL PROTECT THE SECURITY AND INTERESTS OF ALL LEBANESE COMMUNITIES. THIS WILL IN TURN REQUIRE SOME ADJUSTMENTS IN THE LEBANESE POLITICAL STRUCTURE TO GIVE THE MOSLEM COMMUNITY A ROLE MORE COMMENSURATE WITH ITS NUMBERS WHILE REASSURING THE CHRISTIANS THAT THEY HAVE A SECURE FUTURE IN LEBANON AND PERSUADING THEM THAT
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PARTITION IS NO ANSWER TO THEIR FUTURE. THIS HAS BEEN THE BASIC MESSAGE THAT AMBASSADOR BROWN HAS CONVEYED IN ALL HIS CONTACTS WITH ALL PARTIES.

5. WITH RESPECT TO FAHMY'S QUESTION ABOUT THE EFFECT ON ASAD OF OUR PUBLIC STATEMENTS ON THE SYRIAN ROLE, WE HAVE ATTEMPTED IN THOSE STATEMENTS TO DO TWO THINGS: FIRST, TO DRAW A CLEAR DISTINCTION BETWEEN SYRIAN POLITICAL EFFORTS TO MEDIATE AMONG THE VARIOUS LEBANESE

PARTIES ON THE ONE HAND, AND SYRIAN MILITARY INTERVENTION ON THE OTHER. GIVEN THE FACT THAT THE PRINCIPAL LEBANESE PARTIES THEMSELVES HAVE PUBLICLY ENCOURAGED SYRIAN

POLITICAL MEDIATION AND THAT IN FACT THERE HAS BEEN NOTHING ELSE GOING IN THIS RESPECT, IT HAS BEEN OUR JUDGMENT THAT IT WAS NECESSARY TO RECOGNIZE THIS REALITY IF OUR EFFORTS TO INFLUENCE THE SITUATION IN CONSTRUCTIVE DIRECTIONS WERE TO BE CREDIBLE. ALL THE EVIDENCE WE HAVE, IN FACT, INDICATES THAT ASAD IS SUSPICIOUS AND CRITICAL OF OUR ROLE, WHATEVER WE MAY HAVE SAID PUBLICLY, BECAUSE OF OUR CONSISTENT OPPOSITION TO SYRIAN MILITARY INTERVENTION. FOR EXAMPLE, IN A RECENT MEETING WITH VISITING U.S. SENATORS TO DAMASCUS, PRESIDENT ASAD EXPRESSED STRONG CRITICISM OF U.S. ROLE IN LEBANESE SITUATION, STATING THAT WE WERE AGAINST SYRIAN INTERVENTION AND THUS PREVENTING HIM FROM CARRYING OUT HIS LEBANESE POLICY AS HE WOULD LIKE TO. ASAD SAID HE SAW OUR POLICY AS RELATED TO THE SINAI II AGREEMENT AND DESIGNED TO DIVERT SYRIA FROM ITS MAIN MIDDLE EAST OBJECTIVES BY PROLONGING LEBANESE CRISIS. IN THIS CONNECTION, SADAT AND FAHMY WILL UNDOUBTEDLY HAVE NOTED INCREASINGLY CRITICAL SYRIAN PRESS COMMENTS ABOUT U.S. POLICY IN LEBANESE SITUATION AND ABOUT AMBASSADOR BROWN'S MISSION IN PARTICULAR.

6. FAHMY HAS ALSO ASKED WHETHER WE REGARD THE SEVEN-POINT AGREEMENT REACHED DURING ARAFAT'S RECENT VISIT TO SYRIA AS CONSTRUCTIVE. OUR INTERPRETATION OF THAT AGREEMENT IS THAT IT REFLECTED ASAD'S JUDGMENT THAT HE COULD NOT INFLUENCE LEBANESE SITUATION AS DIRECTLY
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AS HE WOULD LIKE BECAUSE OF OUR CLEAR WARNINGS AGAINST FURTHER SYRIAN MILITARY INTERVENTION. TAKEN BY ITSELF, WE DID NOT SEE THIS AGREEMENT AS WE UNDERSTAND, AS MAKING A CONSTRUCTIVE CONTRIBUTION, AND IT HAS IN FACT UNDERSTANDABLY CREATED SOME ANXIETY AMONG CHRISTIANS AND OTHER MODERATES IN LEBANON. A FINAL JUDGMENT AS TO ITS ULTIMATE IMPACT WILL DEPEND UPON WHETHER OR NOT IT GALVANIZES LEBANESE PARTIES THEMSELVES TO TAKE DECISIONS WHICH WILL DIMINISH OPPORTUNITIES FOR SYRIA/ PLO INFLUENCE OVER LEBANESE AFFAIRS.

7. WE WOULD URGE FAHMY NOT TO PUT CREDENCE IN THE KIND OF REPORTS HE RELATED TO YOU FROM A "MIDDLE EAST POST" (PARA 5 OF CAIRO 5434). SPECIFICALLY, THERE IS NO TRUTH TO REPORT THAT HUSSEIN TOLD US THAT PRICE FOR SYRIAN ACCEPTANCE OF UNDOF RENEWAL WOULD BE U.S. SUPPORT FOR SYRIAN ACTIVITIES IN LEBANON.

8. SO FAR AS AMBASSADOR BROWN'S MEETINGS WITH FRANGIE ARE CONCERNED (PARA 6 OF CAIRO 5434), BROWN HAS IN FACT ONLY SEEN FRANGIE THREE TIMES -- MOST RECENTLY OVER A WEEK AGO. AS WE INFORMED FAHMY, FRANGIE TOLD

BROWN HE WAS PREPARED TO SIGN CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT AND RESIGN AS SOON AS A NEW PRESIDENT HAD BEEN ELECTED. HIS PRINCIPAL CONCERNS WERE THAT SUCH AN ELECTION TAKE PLACE UNDER CONDITIONS FREE OF PRESSURE AND THAT THERE BE ASSURANCES THAT PALESTINIANS WOULD OBSERVE THE CAIRO ACCORDS. FRANGIE'S MORE RECENT HESITANCY APPEARS RELATED TO DOUBTS OF WHETHER THESE LATTER CONDITIONS WILL BE FULFILLED.

9. WITH RESPECT TO HUSSEIN'S FUTURE EXPECTATIONS (PARA 7 OF CAIRO 5434), WE HAVE ALREADY INDICATED IN MY PREVIOUS MESSAGES WHAT HUSSEIN'S POSITION IS WITH RESPECT TO PEACE NEGOTIATIONS. GIVEN HIS POSITION THAT HE IS BOUND BY THE RABAT DECISION, THERE WAS NOTHING MORE TO DISCUSS IN THIS REGARD THOUGH OBVIOUSLY THIS COULD CHANGE IF IT SHOULD PROVE POSSIBLE TO REINVIGORATE THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS. AS FOR EFFORTS TO WEAKEN SYRIAN/JORDANIAN COORDINATION, CIRCUMSTANCES DURING HUSSEIN VISIT AND IN PARTICULAR
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HIS PREOCCUPATION WITH LEBANON AND HIS SUPPORT FOR SYRIAN ROLE THERE DID NOT MAKE THIS A PROPITIOUS TIME FOR SUCH AN EFFORT.

10. I HOPE THAT FOREGOING REPLIES TO FAHMY'S QUESTIONS WILL BE HELPFUL. I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO BRING HIM AND SADAT UP TO DATE WITH RESPECT TO AMBASSADOR BROWN'S CURRENT ACTIVITIES. WE HAVE BECOME INCREASINGLY CONCERNED THAT PRESIDENT FRANGIE HAS NOT YET SIGNED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT WHICH IS A PREREQUISITE FOR FURTHER PROGRESS IN ARRANGING PRESIDENTIAL SUCCESSION. PAST EXPERIENCE HAS SHOWN THAT PROCRASTINATION AND DELAY ON ONE SIDE IN IMPLEMENTING POLITICAL STEPS AGREED UPON AMONG LEBANESE PARTIES AROUSE SUSPICIONS OF OTHER SIDE AND LEAD TO RENEWED WAVES OF VIOLENCE AND BREAKDOWN OF PAST POLITICAL AGREEMENTS.

11. WE ARE THEREFORE INSTRUCTING AMBASSADOR BROWN TO HAVE NEW ROUND OF TALKS WITH PRESIDENT FRANGIE AND OTHER MARONITE LEADERS. HE WILL IN PARTICULAR IMPRESS UPON THEM THAT PRESENT DELAY IN COMPLETING STEPS LEADING TO FRANGIE'S RESIGNATION CAN ONLY CONFRONT THEM WITH RENEWED PRESSURES FOR FURTHER CONCESSIONS AND FOR GREATER DEGREE OF OUTSIDE INTERVENTION. AS WE HAVE FREQUENTLY POINTED OUT, ONLY WAY TO REDUCE SUCH INTERVENTION IS

FOR LEBANESE PARTIES TO AGAIN TAKE MATTERS INTO THEIR OWN HANDS, WHICH, IN PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES, MEANS THAT FRANGIE TAKE THE NEXT STEP NECESSARY TO KEEP THE POLITICAL PROCESS MOVING. BROWN WILL ALSO SEE JUMBLATT TO TELL HIM WHAT WE ARE DOING AND TO EMPHASIZE THAT

WE ARE SEEKING TO AVOID INCREASED SYRIAN INTERVENTION,
AND TO URGE THAT HE EXERCISE RESTRAINT IN HIS
STATEMENTS AND ACTIONS VIS-A-VIS MARONITE LEADERSHIP
IN ORDER TO GIVE TIME FOR OUR EFFORTS TO HAVE EFFECT.

12. TO UNDERLINE IMPORTANCE THAT WE ATTACH TO BROWN'S
CURRENT ROUND OF DEMARCHES, HE WILL TELL LEBANESE
LEADERS THAT HE HAS BEEN INSTRUCTED TO SEE ME IN
LONDON DURING MY TRANSIT THERE AT THE END OF THIS WEEK
AND ALSO TO RETURN TO WASHINGTON TO REPORT ON THE
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RESULTS OF HIS MISSION SO FAR. HE WILL THEN RETURN
TO BEIRUT TO REMAIN UNTIL OUR NEW AMBASSADOR CAN
TAKE UP HIS POST SHORTLY AFTER MY RETURN FROM AFRICAN
TRIP MAY 7.

13. IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO HAVE WHATEVER FURTHER VIEWS,
QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS SADAT AND FAHMY WISH TO CONVEY
TO ME PRIOR TO MY MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR BROWN IN
LONDON THIS SATURDAY. IN PARTICULAR, IT WOULD BE
HELPFUL TO HAVE THEIR VIEWS ON THE QUESTIONS WE POSED
EARLIER AS TO WHAT THE U.S. ROLE SHOULD BE IN THE
LEBANESE SITUATION AND WHAT THEY WOULD LIKE US TO
BE DOING IN EXISTING CIRCUMSTANCES. KISSINGER

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